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KEESING, MADELEINE SIDLE. Three Paintings. (1974)  
Directed by: Mr. Walter Barker. Pp. 3

The thesis consists of nine paintings.

This thesis was exhibited in the Weatherspoon Art  
Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
from January 19, 1975 through February 2, 1975

A 35 mm color transparency of each work is on file at  
the Walter C. Jackson Library of the University of North  
Carolina at Greensboro.

THREE PAINTINGS  
"

by

Madeleine Sidle Keesing  
"

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

Greensboro  
1974

Approved by

Walter Barker  
Thesis Adviser

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the  
Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina  
at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser Walter Barker

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William M. Rind  
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December 3, 1974  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# CATALOGUE

TITLE	DIMENSIONS	MEDIUM
Painting No. 1	52" X 74½"	gesso and acrylic
Painting No. 2	51½" X 69½"	gesso and acrylic
Painting No. 3	47½" X 70"	gesso and acrylic

My thesis is a series of paintings which grew out of several years of exploring various properties of paint, water, canvas and paper. The paintings of my thesis and the paintings which preceeded them were placed in a horizontal position, where intermittent layers of gesso and layers of very diluted paint were poured and brushed across the surface of the painting. In some of the paintings which preceeded my thesis I explored the way colors bled through the layers of paint. In another group of paintings, which I did before my thesis, I was interested in the way paint settled and dried when poured onto crumpled or torn paper. In other paintings I found that a fine quality of rag paper, with several layers of gesso applied, forms "lakes" and "rivers" when a mixture of paint and water is poured onto it.

The paintings in my thesis are made by a process which is similar to and an extension of the processes used in the earlier paintings I have just described. Many layers of gesso are brushed on an unstretched canvas approximately four feet wide and six feet long. I decide how dark the last layer of gesso will be in a spectrum of light gray and white. When the gesso is dry, I fold the canvas so that it forms horizontal creases which vary slightly in their distance from each other. After the canvas has been folded long enough for the creases to remain in the canvas it is unfolded. I then pour and brush over the surface of the canvas a blue paint which I have mixed from varying combinations of ultramarine blue, cobalt blue, alizarin crimson, cadmium red, black and white. I thin the paint with quite a bit of water. I pour and brush this mixture across the canvas. The paint

runs down into the creases where it becomes more concentrated and settles forming lines. When it is dry I either accept it as a finished painting or I paint a layer of white or gray gesso over it to cover it entirely. When that is dry I fold the canvas again, bearing in mind what changes I want to take place such as thicker or thinner lines, darker or lighter colors or possibly a change in the arrangement of the lines. This process usually repeats itself many times before I am satisfied with the results. The canvases are thick with paint when I am finally satisfied with them and the surface has developed a character of its own. I seek a balance between the control of the process I have imposed on the canvas and the freedom of flowing paint.

All of the paintings in my thesis exhibition are predominantly blue. There are several reasons why I have chosen to work with this relatively limited range of color. I decided to work with one color because I wanted to simplify issues rather than complicate them. The paintings are much easier to compare with each other graphically if they are all of a similar color; and perhaps even more important, I feel that blue relates more directly than another color to the landscape, waterscape quality that I want these paintings to transmit.

I consider the process I go through to make these paintings to be an integral part of what they are about. I feel that by pouring a liquid paint on a surface which has evolved gradually I am doing a kind of painting which by its very process is closely related to nature.

The horizontal lines and the spaces between them are equally important to me. I feel that the horizontal lines are reminiscent of lines one sees in a landscape or waterscape. Plowed fields after a heavy rainfall, as the water soaks in, could look like my paintings. A lake, or an ocean as



waves travel to the shore, sometimes forms horizontal lines in similar rhythms. Like a rock cut on the earth's surface or a cliff along the shore, the surface of the painting has an eroded, partly transformed quality, a combination of structural forms and textural variation caused by a repeated weathering process.